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HENRY CUYLER BUNNER.

No more grateful task can fall to the critic than the effort to do justice, and to help his readers to do justice, to a spirit with whom he feels himself kindred, in whom he sees the accomplishment of many of his own aims and the realization of many of his literary ideals. I had not the good fortune to know Mr. Bunner in the flesh, but I feel that I know him in the spirit, sure that I should have admired and been drawn to him. I feel his winning personality shedding its warmth through all his work, thrilling everywhere with that touch of nature that makes the whole world kin, and thus he is more real to me than many an author of whom I have read as much and as diligently.

From the notices written by Mr. Bunner's friends at the time of his death I gather that he was born at Oswego, New York, August 3, 1855, and, after a life spent almost wholly in New York, died at Nutley, New Jersey, May 11, 1896, at the age of forty, in the full flower of his talent and of his manhood. After a brief experience of business he cast his lot with the muses in 1873, and became one of the staff of the *Arcadian*, a struggling periodical that died of inanition in 1877. Then a happy chance placed him in charge of the English edition of *Puck*, which had been started as a German periodical the year before. In this capacity he continued till his death, acting at first, at times, as reporter for several New York journals, and always contributing much both to his own and to other periodicals, so that far the greater part of his volumes are republications.

To these volumes[1] I shall confine my attention here, for

[1] These volumes so far as known to me, are: Poetry: "Airs from Arcady," 1884; "Rowen," 1892; "The Poems of H. C. Bunner," (chiefly reprinted) 1896. Novels: "A Woman of Honor," 1883; "The Midge," 1886; "The Story of a New York House," 1887; "The Runaway Browns," 1892. Collected sketches and stories: "Short Sixes," 1890; "Zadoc Pine," 1891; "Made in France," 1893; "More Short Sixes," 1894; "Jersey Street and Jersey Lane," 1896; "Love in Old Cloathes," 1896. He wrote also in col-

most of this journalistic production was naturally ephemeral, and it would be an ill service to his memory to exhume it from the dusty tomb where it lies with its task done, inviting oblivion. For in the earlier years of his connection with *Puck* he wrote a considerable part of that paper, beside editing the rest, and the public that he was in some measure constrained to seek, demanded quantity rather than quality. They were content for the greater part of their weekly feast with a kind of wit that can be produced almost mechanically, and of which the value is therefore naturally regulated, like that of other commodities, by the laws of supply, demand, and cost of production.

But as Bunner's editorial success began to give him time and scope he was led first to somewhat unsuccessful dramatic attempts, and then, in 1883, he ventured on the fickle sea of fiction with "A Woman of Honor," based on his drama "Faith." But as he took little pride in this earliest child of his imagination, we may pass it by, noting only that, while it lacks only too obviously the restraint of maturity, it shows as obviously the potentiality of genius.

This story seems to have been written in 1881. Three years later appeared the first of the literary works on which Mr. Bunner's fame will rest. This was "Airs from Arcady," a collection of poems, and we may therefore fitly begin the study of his literary output by an examination of his work as a poet. These "Airs from Arcady" comprise forty-nine poems selected from a mass of ephemeral verses, which their maker, with sober self-criticism most rare in young poets, felt were unworthy to live, though in their day many of these rejected pieces had been more popular and perhaps more keenly enjoyed than any other of his early writings. He would admit among his "Airs from Arcady" no

laboration with Professor Brander Matthews, "Studies in Story-Telling," 1885, which I have not seen; nor have I been able to consult his contribution to "A Portfolio of Players," 1888; nor to examine his dramatic efforts of which "The Tower of Babel," 1892; written in collaboration with Mr. Julian Magnus, is said to be not without merit. Mr. Bunner was also a popular lecturer.

mere merry jingling of cap and bells, none of the professional outpourings of his Victor Hugo Dusenberry, and so this earlier volume bears witness rather to his grace than to his versatility or even to his wit. Of strength there is indeed very little, and that chiefly where his lyre was set vibrating by breaths from other spirits. For he was here at the first, as he remained till almost the very last, a wonderful *profiteur*, able to take up into himself and to make wholly his own the spirit, the temper, the mode and the touch of artists far greater than he. Bunner's own pan-pipe was a pleasing but modest instrument. These verses flow naturally. If they neither disturb, delight, raise, nor even refine, yet they give us a vague sense of restful charm. And though this may occasionally be dissipated for a moment by metrical inequalities, that in this kind of verse are less pardonable than where the metre has the burden of great thoughts, yet far more often it is lit up by flashes of humor that give a delightfully piquant sauce to sentiment. Hear him for instance, as he writes to his lady-love, off from New York for the summer, how:

> I haunt Pursell's, to his amaze,
> Not that I care to eat there,
> But for the dear cladestine days
> When we two had to meet there.
> Oh! blessed is that baker's bake,
> Past cavil and past question.
> I ate a bun for your sweet sake,
> And memory helped digestion.

Here if the first seven lines are the hand of Dobson the eighth is surely the voice of Heine, and in Mr. Bunner's franker imitations we get the best that the "Airs from Arcady" have to give, unless indeed this be perhaps that sweet lyric cry "To Her," with which the volume closes. I do not think Mr. Swinburne would or need be ashamed of the variation on "Home, Sweet Home" that is here attributed to him, for in reading it the critic is surprised to catch precisely that charm which he had supposed to be Mr. Swinburne's unique gift. Though, here too, *Puck* peeps

out from behind the mask with a delightful quizzica[1] *double-entendre* at the close:

> For the heart give the hope that it knows not,
> Give the balm for the burn of the breast,
> For the soul and the mind that repose not,
> O: give us a rest!

Almost equally happy is the variation ascribed to Austin Dobson on the same theme and parts of the alleged "poem" attributed to Walt Witman are instinct with that author's uniquely vivid ruggedness.

Stylistically "Rowen," Mr. Bunner's second volume of verses, is superior to the former. It shows a decidedly firmer and surer touch, and occasionally the poet strikes deeper chords. We feel here more of that pathos that gives an added charm to the wit of his best prose tales. "The Little Shop," for instance, recalls Coppée at his best. But on the other hand it is clear that in the eight years that had intervened since the "Airs from Arcady" the poet has become far less bohemian in his sympathies. His public interests are wider, his domestic feeling stronger. Yet even here I think the best is that in which he throws himself frankly into the spirit of another, and the piece that I find most worthy of citation is itself called "Imitation:"

> My love she leans from the window,
> Afar in a rosy land,
> And red as a rose are her blushes,
> And white as a rose is her hand.
>
> I dwell in a land of winters
> From my love a world apart.
> But the snow blooms over with roses
> At the thought of her in my heart.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> This German style of poem
> Is uncommonly popular now.
> For the worst of us poets can do it,
> Since Heine has showed us how.

Since Mr. Bunner's death the "Airs from Arcady" and "Rowen" have been reprinted in a single volume with eight "Ballads of the Town" and four "Later Lyrics."

The "Ballads" are as graceful as any of the earlier verses, but they mark progress in their firmer mastery of technique, their gentler pathos and their more subdued humor. Among the so-called "Lyrics," the "Song for Labor Day" is a noble call to work, instinct with the sane and sober energy that pulsed through Mr. Bunner's political editorials and found its highest prose expression in "Zadoc Pine." On the other hand, the lines written for the "Reunion of the Army of the Potomac," less than a year before his death, seem to me somewhat heavily conventional and strained in sentiment. Bnt perhaps this was a case where realistic observation was calculated to check rather than stimulate the genial current of the poet's soul. Again in "The Red Box at Vesey Street" he caught Coppée's genial vein, and finally, the blank verses on the death of Henry V. have a rugged strength which suggests, though it does not fully display, a hitherto unguessed tragic power.

But if we can claim no very exalted place for Mr. Bunner's poetry, at least it was always manly, pure, and sweet; wholesome and kindly even in its satire; and the same may be said of his prose novels and tales, whose excellence is far higher in their kind. We have here to deal with three novels and with six volumes of collected stories and sketches, and as it is by the latter that Mr. Bunner will probably be best and longest remembered they may be best reserved for the close.

Two years after the "Airs from Arcady" appeared "The Midge" (1886), a work for which I confess a peculiar predilection. There is no book of our author in which the psychology appears to me more keen, the wit more kindly, or the pathos more true to nature. The story seems to have been written under the inspiration of betrothal and marriage (1886), which doubtless influenced the writer's ethical and æsthetic attitude, and, as in all marriage of true minds, influenced it for good, yes, almost always, for the best. "The Midge" is a story of New York and of that "coast of Bohemia" which Bunner knew as few of our

good writers have done. In it, but not of it, he understood where he could not sympathize, and he sympathized where he did not imitate. The chief character in the story, the Doctor, with more philanthropy than social or professional ambition, settles in the French quarter of New York, and after some fourteen years of unobtrusive healing and celibate segregration, suddenly finds himself half against his will, the guardian of an orphan waif of foreign and eminently bohemian parentage. Some of the scenes in the early part of the book are admirable bits of genre painting, and the minor characters, especially the Goubauds and the priest Dubé, are very clearly individualized. But it is the evolution of the relation of the doctor to his ward that gives the book its beauty and its peculiar charm. At first busy scandal makes him dread her presence, then he begins to tolerate, to like, and at length, too late, to love, until at last his love conquers all selfishness and he makes the great renunciation, himself winning for her the lover of her choice, whose youthful passion is to her more than his mature devotion. And then, the Midge herself! The gradual unfolding of this virgin lily sprung from such festering decay is treated with a grace that it is not too much to call beautiful. Occasionally, too, we come upon a vein of delightful satire, as in the easy-going doctor's choice of a religion for his charge.

Very similar in its key, though wholly different in its scene and subject, is "The Story of a New York House" with which one should associate for the artistic treatment "The Story of a Path in Jersey Street and Jersey Lane" and "A Second-Hand Story in Zadoc Pine." The general verdict of critics seems to rank "The Story of a New York House" as superior to "The Midge." In mastery of style and restrained strength of diction it does indeed mark, as we should expect, the maturer writer, but, on the other hand, I miss in it the freshness of the inspiration of 1886, and also the structural unity of the earlier work. For an inanimate object, a path, a psalm-book, or a house, is not a

sufficient bond to connect such widely differing phases of character as are presented to us here in the three generations of Dolphs who owned the once stately mansion in Greenwich Village, New York City. The story of this house is the story of a family, of the incipience and growth to mastery of the vertigo of speculation and the race for wealth that bring the Dolphs, as they have many prouder names, to poverty-stricken extinction; but that any novel of generations shall work effectively it must be constructed on a larger scale, it must move by its mass, while this little volume will be remembered rather for its single scenes or isolated episodes than as an ordered masterpiece. One has the impression of successive pictures thrown upon a screen, each clear and interesting but each leaving its own impression. And yet one makes this reserve unwillingly of a book that contains such masterly scenes as the clandestine funeral of the first Mrs. Dolph in the cholera panic of 1822 or old Mr. Dolph's last dinner party, or the meeting of father and son, anarchist and aristocrat, in the draft riots of 1862. The closing scene, too, is very effective in spite of its vulgar Southerner, whom we feel to be a grotesque though kindly caricature.

Very different from this story or from "The Midge" is Mr. Bunner's last novel "The Runaway Browns." Indeed this ought rather to be classed with the frankly humorous short stories, for though the idyllic and pathetic are not wanting they are masked behind a rollicking humor that gives to fancy its freest rein. We are here introduced to the young love of Paul and Adele, a young couple of Philadelphian origin, and therefore naturally enjoying a guileless innocence of the ways of the profane world. Yet even they grow somewhat weary of the monotonous ease of their eventless life in a suburb of social and commercial New York, and after nursing their ennui on the novels of adventure, or the venturesome novels, of the day, they determined to set out themselves in quest of happenings. In short our Philadelphians run away from home, and this

book is a tale of their adventures, at first with a band of actors whom they fell upon and who fell upon them, then as amateur peddlers, and, finally, in the still more unpleasant position of violators of the license laws, from which durance vile they were naturally not averse to return to the *otium cum dignitate* of their suburban cottage and the genial housekeeper they had left behind them, who will linger in many a reader's mind as a fond dream of what a housekeeper might be, and doubtless will be in the New Jerusalem, but seldom or never is in this vale of domestic woe. Clever "The Runaway Browns" certainly is in its correlation of naïve ideals and rude realities, but it has no enduring artistic qualities such as ought to insure the life of "The Midge" and of many of the short stories.

Such of these tales and sketches as Mr. Bunner or his executors have thought worthy of preservation are collected in six volumes, the first of which dates from 1890, and revealed its author as perhaps the best raconteur among our literary men. These "Short Sixes", stories to be told "while the candle burns", tales of piquant humor, deft character sketches with swift telling strokes, vivid painting of effective situations, and all in an environment which his readers knew or might know as well as he, the great city and its teeming life; — I do not know who has done all this for us as well well as Bunner, and the names are few of those who have done it better anywhere since Boccaccio's wonderful "Decamerone," which one is not surprised to learn had been in his young days one of Bunner' favorite studies in form, and he could not easily have found a better model, though he was quick to recognize the greatest successor of the Florentine, and was one of the first in America to study with critical admiration the literary cameos of that artist in brief fiction, Guy de Maupassant.

In "Short Sixes" there is more of the Frenchman than of the Italian, and Mr. Bunner's editorial associate, Mr. Paine, tells us[1] that he was so conscious of this indefinable

[1] *The Critic*, 1896, May, p. 363.

debt that he wished to acknowledge it loyally on the title page, and was with difficulty persuaded of his own spiritual parentage. It was here, as with his poetry. He was at his best when he took up into himself, as he had a marvellous capacity for doing, the manner and method of another. And in this his versatility was truly protean. We are told that when once a story by Stockton had been promised to the readers of a midsummer *Puck*, and by some untoward chance was not forthcoming, Mr. Bunner supplied the gap with something so nearly "equally as good" that the Rudder Granger might well wonder if he had not dictated it in his sleep, so perfectly did it catch a key that he might well have fancied his own unique possession. He repeated the *tour de force* for Kipling; and here in "Short Sixes" all English readers might bless Bunner that he had read his Maupassant to such good purpose. For exquisite as that French work is, it must always remain "cavaire to the general" as well as to that better half of our reading public the fear of whose righteous petticoats is ever before the eyes of the American who must live by his pen. He writes not as he would but as he must, for better or worse, possibly for both better and worse, for we purchase at least immunity from "Charlot s'amuse" and "Les Sœurs Vatard" by denying ourselves the exquisite artistry of "Sapho" and "Aphrodite." Be that as it may, in these "Short Sixes" the well-spring of Maupassant's prose has been filtered through an American mind, and we may all drink our fill and fear no contagion save that of merriment.

"Short Sixes" is not unnaturally the most popular of Bunner's works. A cosmopolitan taste may prefer "Made in France," a refined culture may find a more dainty pleasure in "Love in Old Cloathes," but in these earlier stories there is more of the indigenous flavor, a little more of the grotesque exaggeration and the dry drollery that differentiates American humor so sharply from the continental that we are quite taken aback when we find these qualities, as we sometimes do, in their full flavor on the Parisian boule-

vards, as, for instance, in the work of Grosclaude or of Cran d'arche. But this very exaggeration, while it may make the judicious grieve, by no mean offends the ubiquitous general reader. He will hardly pause to note the trace of tartness in this early fruit that, to my fancy at least, does not attain its crisp ripeness till "Made in France" nor its full mellowed richness till the very last. But these are matters that in the space of this article I can neither elaborate nor prove. Let him who is curious in such things consider in this first volume "The Tenor" or "Zenobia's Infidelity," and then seek their parallels in later ones. He will not find them. But on the contrary he will find that the evolution is in the direction suggested by the bittersweet pathos of the "Nine Cent-Girls" or "The Love Letters of Smith," or in that foreshadowed in the keen satire of "A Sisterly Scheme" with its faint hint of a cynical spice, or perhaps by the most caustic hate of wheedling hypocrisy that characterized "The Two Churches of 'Quawket. These four stories each in its way may still claim rank among Bunner's best, but in later volumes the art grows ever more restrained and even. We may perhaps catch no finer strains but we shall note fewer and less obtrusive discords.

For the years from 1891 to 1893 are crucial in the evolution of Mr. Bunner's genius. They were years of tentative effort in varied direction, and of rapid artistic and psychologic evolution. He followed the success of "Short Sixes," with a curiously heterogeneous volume of which the first piece, "Zadoc Pine," is one of the finest literary expressions that I know of those elements in our national American character that made and still maintain our country free both from foreign mastery and domestic decay and dissolution. It is a tale full of the healthiest naturalistic inspiration and the most proudly confident Americanism. What then must be our surprise to find it followed by "Natural Selection," the moral of which is that the upper middle class should not attempt to mingle their blood with their

social betters. Both story and moral have been highly commended. Of the latter I will not speak, but surely the psychology is faulty and the denouement quite too improbable to be effective. But be this as it may, this tale is both in form and contents unhomologous with its predecessor and equally so with its successor "Casperl," which, so far as I know, is Mr. Bunner's first, and, I am pleased to add, his last attempt at the German household tale. But we have by no means yet exhausted this volume's strange variety. Its fourth piece is the story of the fortunes of a Psalm-Book, a link between the "New York House," of 1887, and the more artistic "Story of a Path," of 1894, and open therefore to the same artistic objections, though there is the truest pathos in its little sermon on the old text *Sunt lachrymæ rerum.* Then to these four tales in their four distinct keys, there is added a fifth tale and manner, "Mrs. Tom's Spree," where we move somewhat uncomfortably among the urban and rustic readers of *Town Topics*, through weary frivolity to a conclusion as near to the borders of mawkishness as it was given to Bunner's healthy common-sense to deviate. And then, finally, in "Squire Five-Fathom" we have a study of decayed aristocracy with a melodramatic close. Thus the whole book seems to be the work of a man who is testing his powers in new lines after his noteworthy success in the Gallic vein; unless indeed it be a cargo of earlier ventures committed to the maturer captaincy of "Zadoc Pine," and sailing in the broad wake of "Short Sixes."

In 1892 this experimenting was continued in "The Runaway Browns" after which Mr. Bunner seemed to grow convinced that smaller canvasses were more favorable to his genius, for he never again attempted sustained narrative nor the analysis of psychological evolution. The process of elimination had taught him his literary vocation. He could do one thing better than any living American. He could catch the humor, the pathos, the folly of modern urban and suburban life, and present it to us in sketches whose brevity implied no incompleteness.

For keen humor and kindly satire, some of these stories "Made in France" are as good as anything I know, and not infrequently they surpass their models. "Father Dominick's Convert," for instance, is Maupassant's "Confession de Théodule Sabot," but except for the very close, where Anglo-Saxon conventions of propriety and reverence imposed restraints on the artist, Bunner's treatment of Maupassant's theme seems the more artistic and the more truly humorous. Certainly it is more broadly human and it is much more elaborate. Maupassant's "Abbé Maritime" is *un prêtre quelquonque* with no marked individuality. He concentrates all his light on Théodule. But our Father Dominick lives, a perfect type and yet in no way a mere symbol, but a real flesh and blood priest, just such a one as we know is ruling to-day with shrewd masterful goodness in many a Ste-Anne Guigneguiche in Quebec and in New England too. From his model Bunner took the idea of a shrewd, hard-hearted atheist, a danger to the parish, restored to the outward communion of the church by a Machiavellian appeal to his avarice. The Frenchman's sole purpose is to show the greed of this joiner gradually overmastering all his prejudices and instincts till he consents to edify the community by his confession and communion. Nearly every phrase of Maupassant has its counterpart in Bunner, but as I study them, side by side, I find in the American a fuller humor and a truer art. Here again Bunner is the ideal *profiteur*. Without Maupassant he might perhaps have been unable to give us this at all. With his aid he has given us a better piece of work than his master. The remainder of Maupassant's tale, the confession itself, is in his very best vain, and is, indeed, that for the sake of which all the rest was written. Here, as has been said, Bunner was handicapped by the reticence that English peoples demand and practise in the treatment of spiritual things, and in the greater reverence which they feel or assume toward all that concerns religion. Maupassant's irony here is as fierce and caustic as Swift's. The greedy joiner excuses his multitu-

dinous faults in words that reveal such absolute lack of all moral sense that the smooth casuistry of the priest is stretched to the utmost to preserve the letter of the ecclesiastical law while he strews the sinner's path with roses and builds a golden bridge for the prodigal's return. The cynicism is at times awful. We are fascinated, yet we shrink, and if here Bunner has fallen far behind his original in art, I am not sure this should not be put to the credit side of his account in the final judgment.

The further we pursue the parallel, the more convinced we become that Bunner has nothing to fear from it. "A Capture" is quite equal to "Les Prisonniers," and "Tony" to "Toine." And just as he has caught admirably the "local color" in "The Prize of Propriety," so in "The Pettibone 'Brolly" he has wholly transmuted France into America. Twice, only, his great master has betrayed him into an excess of heartlessness. "A Pint's a Pound" is unworthy of artistic treatment as it is of human nature, and "The Joke on M. Peptonneau," though with no distinct suggestion from Maupassant, has quite too much of his unsympathizing Norman callousness. Such a "joke" is not witty, and no art in its narration can save the reader from a moral revolt at its repulsivness. There are other weak points in the collection. "Uncle Atticus" will not bear transplanting from the religious atmosphere of France, the denouement of "Dennis" is too trivial, and the whole of "The Minuet" too slight and artificial for their robust company. But taken as a whole this volume was Bunner's high-water mark as a story-teller until he filled even his greatest admirers with a surprised delight by "Love in Old Cloathes."

In "More 'Short Sixes'" Mr. Bunner gave a freer rein to his rollicking gayety. Delightful in this lower kind is "The Man with the Pink Pants" and "Samantha Boom-de-ay." "Mr. Wick's Aunt" and "My Dear Mrs. Billington" touch a higher plane of humor, but the volume is very unequal, and if it marks an advance in technique over the

first "Short Sixes," it shows less spontaneity of invention and some traces of hasty compilation, which perhaps he may have felt himself, for in 1895 he published no volume though he left at his death materials for two books that contain his most perfect prose. No preceeding volume shows such chastened humor as "Jersey Street and Jersey Lane," none shows such sympathetic delicacy of feeling. It contains no story, strictly speaking. The nearest approach to one, "The Lost Child," is hardly more than a sketch, startling in its vividness. In "A Letter to Town" we watch the gradual awakening of the love for rural life in one of the great army of commuters that flow and and ebb in morning and evening tides to and from New York. But surely the best of this volume are three sketches of New York life as one may watch it from the windows of the *Puck* building on Jersey and Mulberry streets, or in and about the Bowery, or where suburban shabbiness is invading the old rural dignity of Inwood and Manhattanville "from Tieman's to Tubby Hook." All this Mr. Bunner knew, and for it all he had a sympathetic affection, which he expressed very prettily in the dainty quatrain prefixed to "Rowen:"

> Why do I love New York, My Dear?
> I know not. Were my father here,
> And *his*, and *his*, the three and I
> Might perhaps make you some reply.

But if "Jersey Street and Jersey Lane" marks a deepening nature and subtler psychological perception, "Love in Old Cloathes" is the culmination of Mr. Bunner's talent as a prose artist. I do not know when the stories in this this book were written, but I should be much surprised to find that any of them were anterior to 1893, though one or two might seem to owe their inception to the same inspiration that produced "The Midge;" but even here I should think the final touches must have been given after "Made in France." "Love in Old Cloathes," the initial story that gives its name to the rest, has all the fascination of a Pierrot

by Watteau or of a Dresden Shepherdess. It is so winsomely artificial in its old fashioned dress that the little haltings as we read seem only the pauses necessary to our complete enjoyment, like the slow sipping of an old and generous wine. I think, however, that it is an artistic error to tell a story of 1883 in the language of 1783. The humor that comes from saying, or rather printing, "ye bicyle" or "ye Spt of ye Tymes" is of a distinctly lower order than that which characterizes this tale, and it would mar it still more were it not wholly unessential to it and apart from its dainty charm.

Yet that this quintessence of artificiality was only the sport of a virile mind is made very clear by the six stories that follow in this remarkable collection, which indeed is as it were the rainbow of his genius, dividing it as by a prism into seven primary elements that gain each an added charm from the juxtaposition and the contrast. For while in "Love in Old Cloathes" we watched pouting Cupid nestling at last content on Venus' breast, in "A Letter and a Paragraph" we feel the unstilled longing for wife and child that spurs many a struggler in literary Bohemia with true sickness for home, until at last, as here in this tragic idyl, the tired heart fails and the baseless fabric of his vision leaves not a rack behind. Then in "The Red Silk Handkerchief" we exchange this tragic dreamland for a realistic study of the honest love of young manhood, successful in all save in his heart's desire. Or again we have the heart-sickness of hope-deferred etched out for us with an acid that bites almost too relentlessly in "Crazy Wife's Ship." But presently this purple tint of our rainbow is set off by brighter hues, the red, the blue and the gold of "French for a Fortnight," "Our Aromatic Uncle" and "As one Having Authority." The first is a bright and vigorous plea for a rational Sunday, a plea that has the strange art to stir our souls to passionate revolt even while it makes us smile; the second introduces us to the last in the line of Mr. Bunner's genial old men who somehow always carry with them a suggestion

of blue china and blue skies, but the last is true spirit gold breathing the peace of its broad catholicity over the strife of sect and kindling the wonted fires of apostleship beneath the ashes of old age.

So these two posthumous volumes seem to me to sum up the best and the noblest of Mr. Bunner's genius. They may lack the verve that made "Short Sixes" popular but they have for the man of letters a fascination and a charm that make us feel that Mr. Bunner was taken from us in the very fulness of his literary powers. Nowhere had he shown such firmness and such delicacy, such grace and such strong grasp of the underlying realities of human life. In earnestness and forcefulness he was growing to the last. His political editorials, begun as an almost perfunctory accompaniment to the cartoons of his humorous weekly, came with the years to be looked forward to as sure to voice a dignified patriotism, and to ring true to American manhood. Thus he was a power for good in our national life, to our writers of fiction his work was as the healthly tonic of the pine woods. Broad-minded and true-hearted those who knew him best bear witness that he was, and his works follow him to attest to us who were less fortunate their loss and ours.

BENJAMIN W. WELLS.